

***Writing***

**Title:** Susie Can Write!

**Appropriate Grade Level:** K-8

**Brief Description:** The purpose of this intervention is to help a beginning writer increase his or her writing fluency and to provide a model for correct sentence construction. A benefit of this intervention is that it allows students to experience writing success while building their skills.

**Materials Needed:**

1. Pencil
2. Paper

**Procedure/Steps:**

**Step One:**

1. Present students with a list of story titles and if necessary, read that list aloud.
2. Encourage students to select a topic they would enjoy writing about.
3. Have students write the title at the top of the paper and write about their topics as well as they can. (If they ask, cheerfully provide them with the spellings of words.)

**Step Two:**

4. As students finish their paragraphs, have them take turns reading them to the teacher or another adult helper.
5. Ask the students to tell you more about their topic.
6. With student input, rewrite the paragraph and have students read it aloud.

**Step Three:**

7. Have students copy the paragraph from your paper and read it aloud with your help.

**Suggestions for Evaluating Effectiveness:**

Using a set of criteria, score student paragraphs in your record book once a week for several weeks. Scores should improve.

**Comments/tips:**

Have students illustrate their completed paragraphs and post the results up in the classroom.

**Source:**

Bos, C.S. & Vaughn, S. (2002). *Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

**Title:** Increasing Writing Productivity with Self-Monitoring

**Appropriate Grade Level:** Grades One through Eight

**Brief Description:** The purpose of this intervention is to increase word production through self-monitoring of word counts. The rationale behind this intervention is that the more students write, the more effect they will become at writing, and the idea is that if students monitor their amount of writing output, they will strive to increase that amount. A benefit of this intervention is that it improves students' motivation for writing.

**Materials Needed:**

1. Journals or notebooks for student writing (one journal per student)
2. Student-made line graphs for recording word counts
3. Posterboard chart with bar graph for recording class word counts
4. Red felt-tip marker
5. Watch with second hand, kitchen timer, or stopwatch

**Procedure/Steps:**

1. Select a time for freewriting in individual journals. Freewriting should be conducted daily or several times a week.
2. Explain to the students that they will be learning to evaluate their progress in writing by counting and recording the number of words they write during each session.
3. Display the class chart and explain that you will be graphing the total number of words written by the class for each writing session. Using the group average number of words written correctly calculated during the observation period, set a weekly goal of total words to be written by the class. Draw a red line on the chart to indicate that goal. Raise that goal by about 5% each week.
4. Discuss specific topics students may select, provide a writing prompt, or permit students to select their own topics. Provide approximately 15 minutes for writing.
5. After students finish writing, demonstrate how to create a simple line graph on their chart and have them record the number of words they wrote during that session on their graphs. Tell them to count all the words, regardless of whether they believe the words are spelled correctly.
6. Provide an opportunity for students to voluntarily share their writing with the rest of the class.
7. Each week, review journals and graphs to monitor student self-recording and to obtain the class word count total for recording on the class chart. Discuss progress in achieving the weekly goal and praise students if they meet or exceed it.

**Suggestions for Evaluating Effectiveness:**

Count the number of words in freewriting samples for a group of selected students or for the entire class for several weeks. Count each word whether it is spelled correctly an unconventional invented spelling.

**Comments/tips:**

This intervention can also be done for 3-5 minute periods. In that case, give students time to brainstorm ideas and to plan their writing before the time begins.

**Source:**

Rathvon, N. (1999). *Effective School Interventions*. New York: Guilford Press.

**Title:** Proofreading with "SCOPE"

**Appropriate Grade Level:** Intermediate and Advanced

**Brief Description:** As students get older, error free work becomes more and more important. This intervention offers students a mnemonic device for remembering the steps involved in thorough proofreading.

**Materials Needed:**

1. Posterboard with the SCOPE steps written on it:
  - Spelling: Is the spelling correct?
  - Capitalization: Are the first words of sentences, proper names, and proper nouns capitalized?
  - Order of Words: Is the syntax correct?
  - Punctuation: Are there appropriate marks for punctuation where necessary?
  - Express Complete Thought: Does the sentence contain a noun and a verb or is it only a phrase?
2. Student-generated writing piece that needs to be edited.
3. Sample piece of writing on an overhead
4. Overhead projector

**Procedure/Steps:**

1. Discuss with the students how often they get into difficulty because they are not sufficiently skilled at proofreading their papers before they submit them and therefore get low grades because their papers have many errors in them.
2. Teach the students the mnemonic strategy "SCOPE" using the posterboard.
3. Demonstrate using SCOPE with a sample piece of writing on an overhead projector.
4. Give the students ample practice and opportunity to apply SCOPE in their own work.

**Suggestions for Evaluating Effectiveness:**

Record the average number of errors in the work turned in for a group of selected students or for the entire class for several weeks. Compare the scores over time.

**Comments/tips:**

If necessary, staple a copy of the SCOPE sheet to student's papers before they turn them in to remind them to edit their work.

**Source:**

Bos, C.S. & Vaughn, S. (2002). *Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

**Title:** Peer Tutoring Spelling Game

**Appropriate grade level:** All grade levels

**Brief Description:** This intervention is based on increasing active academic responding in the classroom. This strategy targets spelling accuracy by combining classwide peer tutoring with public posting in a game-like format. In addition to providing increased opportunities for each student to practice spelling without increasing the total amount of time set aside for spelling instruction, it prevents reinforcement of errors because peer tutors provide immediate feedback for responses. Also, because the peer tutoring game only takes 15 minutes to complete, it can be easily used within the spelling period, regardless of how the spelling curriculum is arranged.

**Materials Needed:**

- List of spelling words
- Pencil and paper for each student
- Red or blue slips of construction paper in a box, enough for one slip per student
- Posterboard chart listing the team names, with columns for posting red and blue team point totals and weekly team winners

**Procedures/steps for implementation:**

1. Tell the students that they will be playing a new game to help them learn more spelling words. You'll need about 30 minutes for the first day of training
2. Tell the students that the game is like basketball. In this game, they will make "baskets" (2 points) and "foul shots" (1 point). Select one student to demonstrate tutoring to the class, using the procedures described below. Then select two more students and guide them through the procedures in front of the class. Conduct two more demonstrations with other student pairs. Then have the entire class practice the procedures while you walk around the room giving corrective feedback and praise for appropriate tutoring.
3. On Monday of each week, teach the list of new words to the entire class or to the spelling groups.
4. Also on Monday, have each student draw a red or blue slip of paper from a box for assignment to one of two teams. Then create tutor pairs within each team.
5. Begin the tutoring game by asking students to move to their tutoring stations (an arrangement where they can work in pairs). Designate one student to serve as tutor first. Distribute the new word list and spelling forms or sheets of paper
6. Signal the students to begin, and, if desired, set a timer for 5 minutes. Tutors present tutees with the list of words as many times as possible during this time period. The tutor says a word while the tutee writes it on his or her paper. The tutee then rally spells out to the tutor the word he or she has written.
7. If the word is correct, the tutor says, "Correct! Give yourself two points!" and the tutee marks a "2" on his or her list. If the word is incorrect, the tutor points to, pronounces, and spells the missed word orally to the tutee. The tutee must write it correctly three times before receiving the next word. After the word has been corrected, the tutee receives one point.
8. After five minutes, the pair reverses roles

9. During tutoring, walk around the room, supervising and awarding bonus points ("referee points") to tutors for examples of positive tutoring, up to 5 additional points per student.
10. After another five minutes, it is time to stop. Have tutoring pairs add up their points, including any bonus points. Record individual scores on the individual chart, and record team points on the team chart.
11. On Friday, give a spelling test on the words tutors have practiced. Have team pairs exchange papers, correct each other's answers, and award three points for each correctly spelled word.
12. Have each student report his or her points and record them on the individual score chart.
13. Announce the team winner for the week, and post the winner on the team chart.
14. Randomly spot check students' scoring and point additions. Correct as needed.

**Evaluation:**

Compare percent correct scores on weekly spelling tests for the entire class or the selected group of students before and after implementation.

**Comments/Tips:**

Implement a reward for the winning team (small prizes)

Set a class goal of total number of points earned by both teams and have a bigger prize (such as a movie or pizza party).

**Source:**

Delquadri, J.C., Greenwood, C. R., Stretton, K., & Hall, R.V. (1983). The peer tutoring spelling game: A classroom procedure for increasing opportunity to respond and spelling performance. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 6, 225-239.

**Title:** Curriculum-Based Spelling Probes

**Appropriate Grade Level:** All grade levels

**Brief Description:** The purpose of this intervention is to provide information regarding a student's level of spelling skill development compared with that of peers; to set short- and long-term goals for spelling instruction and remediation; to evaluate the effectiveness of spelling interventions; and to provide information for program evaluation.

**Materials Needed:**

1. Three sets of 20 to 25 words taken randomly from the spelling textbook or basal reader series, depending on which is used for spelling instruction; if spelling is integrated into other subject areas, lists can be generated by writing grade-level words on cards and randomly selecting sets of cards.
2. Pencils (2 per student)
3. Lined paper (one per student)
4. Stopwatch or watch with second hand

**Procedure/Steps:**

1. Give students copies of the topic sentence and give the following directions  
"I want you to write a story. I am going to read a sentence to you first, and then I want you to write a short story about what happens. You will have 1 minute to think about the story you will write and then have 3 minutes to write it. Do your best work. If you don't know how to spell a word, you should guess. Use the sentence I read as your first sentence. Are there any questions? For the next minute, think about... [read story starter]."
2. After 1 minute, say, "Start writing."
3. After 3 minutes, say, "Stop and put your pencil down."

**Suggestions for Evaluating Effectiveness:**

Count the number of words that are correctly written. Do not count numerals as words. If students write the story starter as part of the story, as directed, include the words in the starter as part of the total word count. Compare the words-written-correctly rate to student's individual norms or local norms.

**Comments/tips:**

This probe can be used with individual or groups of students.

**Source:**

Rathvon, N. (1999). *Effective School Interventions*. New York: Guilford Press.

**Title:** Copy, Cover, Compare

**Appropriate Grade Level:** All grade levels

**Brief Description:** This method of teaching and learning spelling words allows the students practice at visualizing and producing the weekly spelling words through a sequence of easy to remember steps. This is a reasonable intervention to implement on an individual level, as self-monitoring is facilitated by having the correct spelling of the word readily available.

**Materials Needed:**

Spelling list  
Pencil  
Paper

**Steps for Implementation**

1. Provide students (or targeted group of students) with a list of spelling words
2. Instruct each student to study a word carefully and then copy it down.
3. Cover the copied word with a sheet of paper and write it from memory
4. Check the word and correct if needed
5. If the word was correctly spelled from memory, move onto the next word
6. If the word was misspelled, repeat steps 2-4.

**Evaluation:**

Compare percent correct scores on weekly spelling tests for the entire class or the selected group of students before and after implementation.

**Comments/Tips:**

Periodically check students' self-corrections

Implement reward system for demonstrated improvement on spelling tests.

**Source:**

Murphy, J., Hern, C., Williams, R., & McLaughlin, T. (1990). The effects of the copy, cover, and compare approach in increasing spelling accuracy with learning disabled students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 15, 378-386.



**Title:** Step-By-Step Cartoon Writing

**Appropriate Grade Level:** Elementary

**Brief Description:** This intervention gives beginning or reluctant writers experience sequencing steps, using transition words, and writing a paragraph. The novel format makes the task more engaging and relevant. It also takes away the anxiety associated with writing and capitalizes on strengths in other areas like drawing.

**Materials Needed:**

1. Index cards without lines
2. Colored Pencils
3. Tape
4. Writing materials

**Procedure/Steps:**

1. Discuss as a group the types of things students do to get ready for school in the morning. Tell students they will be drawing a comic strip about what they do when they get up in the morning.
2. Students draw one event on each index card (e.g., waking up, getting dressed, eating breakfast). Students are encouraged to add detail to their pictures to help them remember exactly what happens.
3. Now students put their ideas in order and tape them together like a comic strip.
4. Before students begin writing, have them use the comic strip as a guide to tell the story out loud.
5. Encourage them to use transition words like first, next, later, and finally. Teachers can post a list of words to use while telling and writing their paragraphs.
6. Students can write one descriptive sentence about each frame of their comic strip to form a paragraph.
7. Attach the final copy to the comic strip and display in the classroom.

**Suggestions for Evaluating Effectiveness:**

Using the number of errors as a marker, compare paragraphs written in this format to paragraphs written without this structure for a select group of students or for the whole class.

**Comments/tips:**

If this intervention is successful, use it again with creative writing projects.

**Source:**

Bos, C.S. & Vaughn, S. (2002). *Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.